

Adding questions to the National Census

The Government is currently calling for submissions to review the questions asked in the census which collects data from Australian household's countrywide every 5 years.

Informed-AUS thinks this is a great idea and would like to add more questions to help inform Australian policy makers and give them indication of changing community expectations. This means that there is no need for future referendums.

Questions proposed to be added to the National Census:

Everyday concerns

What is your households biggest concerns?

Eg. utility prices, housing costs, personal safety, traffic congestion, job opportunities, reaching financial goals, environmental protection, cost of living, value from private health insurance ...

Functioning democracy

Do you think that all donations to political parties should be banned?

Context: In 2018 foreign donations were banned in Australia, a real-time depository of local donations was made live and a limit was placed on donation amounts.

Tax

Context: The ATO released its [corporate tax transparency report](#) in Dec 2017 revealing that 36% of large companies ([732 companies in total](#)) paid no Australian tax in the 2015-16 financial year.

Do you want this ASIC data to be free and not only display how much Australian tax companies have paid, but also companies value of Australian sales and gross profit in Australia?

Context: The Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) already publishes data on how much tax companies pay, it publishes it behind a paywall. The UK and NZ also have paywalls but theirs are much cheaper than Australia's.

Would you like to see a 15% tax on Australian sales for companies that are found to pay no or low tax after they have taken into account all eligible deductions and offsetting their historical losses?

Context: The 2016-17 year company tax rate was 27.5%.

Would you like to see government grants, subsidies and support be ineligible for companies who pay low or no tax?

Do you want to see individuals earning more than AUD\$200,000 pay an effective tax rate of at least 25%?

Context: This is aligned with the idea of US billionaire investor Warren Buffett. He formulated the ['Buffett rule'](#) in 2011 after being horrified to discover that his Secretary paid more tax than he did, as a proportion of income due to tax deductions he was entitled to claim. The Buffett rule is at least 30% tax paid by

those making over \$US1 million. The current income tax rate in Australia for those earning over AUD\$180,001 per year is 45%.

Social justice

Do you want to change Australia's 'Australia Day' date to one that isn't deemed a 'Day of Mourning' by indigenous communities?

Context: In 1788, on this day a fleet of British ships arrived at Sydney Cove.

Safety and Drug policy

Do you think Australia should decriminalise recreational cannabis?

Context: The current NZ Ardern Government is planning on holding a referendum on the legalisation of recreational cannabis.

Would you support having incentives for drug users to assist in drug investigations of manufacturers and dealers?

Do you want to decriminalise personal drug use and instead address it as a health issue?

Context: Money saved could fund access to detox treatments, investing in prevention, overcoming poverty and providing mental health support. Portugal started thinking about addiction as a health issue in 2001 and decriminalized all drugs.

Do you think that those convicted of crimes should only be allowed to appeal if new evidence is found or misinformation in the previous trial is proven?

Do you think that judges and courts should receive training and update guidelines on sentencing that matches community expectations?

Global affairs

Would you like to see more warmer relations with China as our most important trading partner?

Do you think Australia aligns too closely with the USA?

Would you like to see Australia recognise Palestine as a country?

Context: Respondents can see the last 3 times the UN held votes on the issue, and where Australia blocked each one [here](#).

Would you like to put a time limit on the processing of asylum seekers in detention?

Do you want to ban the live export of animals?

Context: Recent legislation in Australia through the Export Legislation Amendment (Live-stock) Bill 2018 means that CEOs will be held personally liable and face criminal offences if they fail to take reasonable steps to prevent their firms disobeying the law and existing regulation to have acceptable conduct and treat animals ethically.

Housing affordability

Would you like to restrict foreigners buying farms and residential housing by introducing a 40% levy on top of purchase price of all properties?

Context: Funds generated could fund social housing investments. Currently foreign buyers buy 25% of new homes in NSW, 17% in VIC and 8% in QLD. Currently there is an application fee for foreign buyers of \$5,000 for properties valued under \$1 million and \$10,000 for properties over \$1 million.

Would you like to ban foreign ownership in residential housing?

Would you like only 100 year leases of farms be available for purchase by foreigners?

Would you like to see changes to negative gearing so that only two properties can be negatively geared per household, with no grandfathering so there is no generational wealth divide?

Context: Negative gearing is when people who own 2 or more properties reduce their tax bill by claiming their mortgages/interest/repairs.

Would you like to see the government incentivise landlords to make their houses available for those on social housing waiting lists?

Context: The current waiting list for social housing was [194,600 households on 30 June 2016](#).

Would you like to see more fines for houses sitting idle for over 6 months to be rented out?

Context: Eg. In January 2018 an annual vacant residential property tax (VRPT) of 1% on value became active in VIC if vacant for more than 6 months and not a holiday home (ie this equates to \$7,000 a year for a \$700,000 house). Fees collected could be transferred into social housing initiatives.

Do you want to see social housing quotas in newly constructed apartments?

Context: In Ireland developers must set aside 10% of all dwellings for social and affordable housing. Ireland has learnt from the shortcoming of London's social housing system where large apartment developments are asked to provide up to 35% affordable housing. Although developers have been able to override this requirement by providing funds and community buildings or transport improvement initiatives in lieu of the quota.

Religion

Do you think that instead of religious chaplains in schools, pastoral care and support should be given by secular youth welfare workers and counsellors?

Context: The 2018-19 federal budget awarded \$247 million to make its religious chaplains in schools program permanent.

Do you think that physician-assisted suicide, with appropriate safeguards, should be decriminalized for those living with intolerable pain?

Context: This has already occurred in the Netherlands. VIC has become the first state in Australia to legalise voluntary assisted dying which will start mid-2019.

Environment

Context: Efficient renewable energy generation technology is already here. Tesla's giant 100 megawatt battery in SA saved consumers [\\$35 million with other energy sources reducing by 90% in 4 months](#), charged by a nearby wind farm.

Do you want the government to put in more steps to reduce Australia's contribution to climate change?

Do you want to see Australia transition away from emitting fossil fuels for energy?

Do you want to stop government investment and support into energy sources that use fossil fuels?

June 2018 © Informed-AUS